

THE ROLE OF THE COMMISSION IN ACHIEVING EDUCATIONAL EQUITY



CALIFORNIA POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION COMMISSION

JUNE 1994

COMMISSION REPORT 94-11

Introduction

On December 12, 1988, the California Postsecondary Education Commission adopted this declaration of policy in order to clarify and communicate its responsibility to advance educational equity in the context of the demographic changes presently occurring in California. The statement stemmed from the September 1988 report of the Commission's Special Committee on Educational Equity, *The Role of the California Postsecondary Education Commission in Achieving Educational Equity in California* (Commission Report 88-31).

On June 6, 1994, the Commission reorganized and expanded the first paragraph of this statement by adding "disability" to the six personal characteristics -- ethnicity, race, language, socioeconomic status, gender, and home community -- that it agreed in 1988 should not determine educational accomplishment in California.

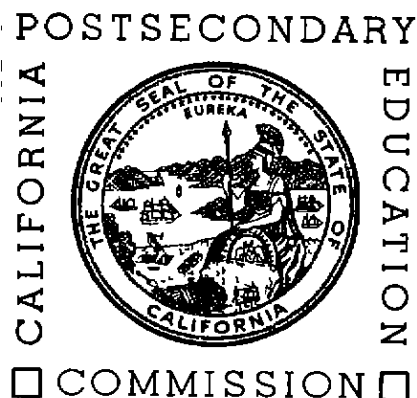
This declaration contains a vision of California in the future, a definition of educational equity, a discussion of the importance of educational equity to the State, an enumeration of the roles that the Commission expects to assume in contributing to the achievement of educational equity, a statement of the principles that will guide Commission action in this area, and an expression of intention to reconsider this policy when the projects outlined in the special committee's report are completed.

Questions about the substance of this statement may be directed to Penny Edgert of the Commission staff at (916) 322-8028. Additional copies of the statement may be obtained from the Commission at Suite 500, 1303 J Street, Sacramento, California 95814-2938, (916) 445-7933.

THE ROLE OF THE COMMISSION IN ACHIEVING EDUCATIONAL EQUITY

A Declaration of Policy

CALIFORNIA POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION COMMISSION
1303 J Street ♦ Suite 500 ♦ Sacramento, California 95814-2938





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THE ROLE OF THE COMMISSION IN ACHIEVING EDUCATIONAL EQUITY

A Declaration of Policy

THE COMMISSION envisions a California of tomorrow as one in which all Californians have an expanded opportunity to develop their talents and skills to the fullest, for both individual and collective benefit. This vision is one in which the characteristics of Californians -- ethnicity, race, language, socioeconomic status, gender, home community, and disability -- do not determine educational accomplishments and achievements. The Commission believes that the State should demonstrate that one of its highest educational priorities is realization of this vision through a commitment of adequate resources, including both new and existing funds.

Flowing from this vision, the Commission defines educational equity as a goal with quantitative and qualitative dimensions that are inextricably interwoven.

- ♦ Quantitatively, the goal of educational equity is achieved when the composition of individuals at all educational levels, from elementary school through college faculties and administrative ranks, mirrors the demography of the State. Realizing this goal requires enhanced success at all educational levels such that there are similar achievement patterns among all groups.
- ♦ Qualitatively, the goal of educational equity is achieved when pluralism and excellence are equal partners in a quality educational environment, especially with respect to curriculum, teaching, research, and public service.

The Commission views the appropriate standard for measuring progress as documented movement toward the previously defined goal of educational equity.

The Commission regards the achievement of educational equity, in a sustained environment of quality, as the critical issue for the State in maintaining its economic, technological, political, and social prominence nationally and internationally for the following reasons:

- ♦ California requires a strong economic base. Because of the relationship between education and employment, the Commission believes that the extent to which all Californians are educated enhances the likelihood that they will make a reasonable living and contribute to the economic stability of the State.
- ♦ California increasingly depends on the scientific and technological expertise of a skilled workforce. Because these skills are developed through education, the Commission believes that the extent to which all Californians are prepared to benefit from advanced training, particularly in scientific and technological areas, will ensure the continued vibrance of California's economy and its capacity to compete with other technologically sophisticated states and nations.

- ♦ California requires an educated and active electorate The Commission believes that education provides the opportunity for all Californians to learn the participatory skills required to become actively involved in the democratic process and to provide leadership for the State in the future

California is part of a world that is becoming increasingly international, interdependent, and multicultural Because these trends require heightened understanding, awareness, and respect for societies other than ours, the Commission believes that education provides opportunities for all Californians to enhance the quality of life within its borders and its relations with neighboring nations through learning about diverse cultures and interacting with individuals of various backgrounds and experiences

The Commission views two principles as its guide in achieving educational equity

- 1 The Commission considers essential the development of an educational system that is structured as an integrated and articulated continuum through which students flow from kindergarten to postgraduate training and from which students earn a quality education Because of the nature of the educational system, the Commission shall acknowledge an essential dependence on elementary and secondary schools to prepare students for higher education and the responsibility of postsecondary education to cooperate with schools in this effort
- 2 The Commission considers educational equity integral to the mission, goal, and purpose of the educational system and each of its component parts The Commission shall assess and make recommendations on the extent to which the system's priorities, resource allocations, and policy decisions reflect the centrality of educational equity

The Commission believes its actions in the area of educational equity should be integrated within all aspects of its statewide policy and program review and coordinative functions In serving these functions, the Commission will perform eight interrelated roles

Statewide policy and program review function

- 1 The Commission shall continue to serve the Governor and Legislature by reviewing, recommending, and, when requesting, prioritizing (for resource allocation purposes), strategies and programs to achieve educational equity
- 2 The Commission shall focus on the effect of State and institutional policies, and their resultant implementation, on the achievement of educational equity To determine these effects, the Commission shall review evaluation studies of established programs, policies, and practices conducted by their administrative agencies or external evaluators
- 3 The Commission shall focus on the evaluation of experimental programs and practices to determine their effectiveness and potential as statewide models to achieve educational equity

- 4 The Commission shall conduct research, policy, and program reviews with a view toward identifying and optimizing opportunities for change that enhance educational equity
- 5 The Commission shall solicit resources and coordinate an intersegmental program to encourage the creation and adoption of innovative strategies to enhance educational equity that would link experimental concepts, successful implementation processes, and programs
- 6 The Commission shall conduct a public information campaign, in conjunction with its information clearinghouse responsibilities, to communicate with the Governor, Legislature, educational systems, policy makers, and the general public on the policies, programs, and practices that have demonstrated a positive effect on achievement of that goal

Coordinative function

- 1 The Commission shall advocate and promote the importance of educational equity to the State's future in order to generate the commitment and resources necessary to achieve this goal. In this regard, the Commission shall encourage all Californians — those from the private sector, community organizations and agencies, clergy, local and State government, the media, private citizens — to join with educators to achieve this goal
- 2 The Commission shall cooperate with established coalitions and develop new collaborations that act effectively to achieve educational equity, including but not limited to, the California Education Round Table and the California Business Roundtable. Because other than educational factors contribute to educational outcomes, the Commission shall collaborate with appropriate bodies to develop a global and integrated approach to eliminate barriers to achieving this goal

The Commission expects to communicate, through development of its annual Plan of Studies and management of staff resources, its specific priorities related to educational equity. Periodically, the Commission anticipates reconsidering the direction delineated in this declaration by assessing its effectiveness in implementing its priorities and by charting future courses designed to provide the State with policy leadership to achieve educational equity and to make its vision of California a reality

Adopted December 12, 1988

Revised (first paragraph) June 6, 1994

Note. As mentioned in the Introduction, this statement stems from the September 1988 report, *The Role of the California Postsecondary Education Commission in Achieving Educational Equity in California*, of the Commission's Special Committee on Educational Equity, which was chaired by Commissioner Cruz Reynoso.

During 1988, that committee examined the Commission's past actions regarding equal educational opportunity and access with the intention of developing a plan

for its future actions in this area. It found that many of the Commission's past activities with respect to issues of educational equity have been reactive and post hoc, in that they had focused on documenting the status of education in the State and evaluating State-funded programs. That documentation helped create a sense of urgency among California educators to adapt to the dramatic changes occurring in the population and to hasten statewide responses to these demographic shifts, but the committee concluded that these activities had not provided insights into ways by which the State can plan for and take advantage of opportunities to accelerate progress in achieving educational equity.

In its report, the special committee presented a plan that identified specific roles and responsibilities for the Commission as a policy body that focuses on planning and action strategies that it has the greatest potential to influence State policy in enhancing equitable educational opportunities and outcomes. This statement has been adapted from the recommendations of that report.

CALIFORNIA POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION COMMISSION

THE California Postsecondary Education Commission is a citizen board established in 1974 by the Legislature and Governor to coordinate the efforts of California's colleges and universities and to provide independent, non-partisan policy analysis and recommendations to the Governor and Legislature

Members of the Commission

The Commission consists of 17 members. Nine represent the general public, with three each appointed for six-year terms by the Governor, the Senate Rules Committee, and the Speaker of the Assembly. Six others represent the major segments of postsecondary education in California. Two student members are appointed by the Governor.

As of February 1995, the Commissioners representing the general public are

Henry Der, San Francisco, *Chair*
C. Thomas Dean, Long Beach
Elaine Alquist, Santa Clara
Mim Andelson, Los Angeles
Jeffrey I. Marston, San Diego
Guillermo Rodriguez, Jr., San Francisco,
Vice Chair
Melinda G. Wilson, Torrance
Linda J. Wong, Los Angeles
Ellen F. Wright, Saratoga

Representatives of the segments are

Roy T. Brophy, Fair Oaks, appointed by the Regents of the University of California,
Yvonne W. Larsen, San Diego, appointed by the California State Board of Education,
Alice Petrossian, Glendale, appointed by the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges,
Ted J. Saenger, San Francisco, appointed by the Trustees of the California State University, and
Kyhl Smeby, Pasadena, appointed by the Governor to represent California's independent colleges and universities, and
vacant, representing the Council for Private Postsecondary and Vocational Education

The two student representatives are

Stephen Leshner, Meadow Vista
Beverly A. Sandeen, Costa Mesa

Functions of the Commission

The Commission is charged by the Legislature and Governor to "assure the effective utilization of public postsecondary education resources, thereby eliminating waste and unnecessary duplication, and to promote diversity, innovation, and responsiveness to student and societal needs."

To this end, the Commission conducts independent reviews of matters affecting the 2,600 institutions of postsecondary education in California, including community colleges, four-year colleges, universities, and professional and occupational schools.

As an advisory body to the Legislature and Governor, the Commission does not govern or administer any institutions, nor does it approve, authorize, or accredit any of them. Instead, it performs its specific duties of planning, evaluation, and coordination by cooperating with other State agencies and non-governmental groups that perform those other governing, administrative, and assessment functions.

Operation of the Commission

The Commission holds regular meetings throughout the year at which it debates and takes action on staff studies and takes positions on proposed legislation affecting education beyond the high school in California. By law, its meetings are open to the public. Requests to speak at a meeting may be made by writing the Commission in advance or by submitting a request before the start of the meeting.

The Commission's day-to-day work is carried out by its staff in Sacramento, under the guidance of its executive director, Warren Halsey Fox, Ph.D., who is appointed by the Commission.

Further information about the Commission and its publications may be obtained from the Commission offices at 1303 J Street, Suite 500, Sacramento, California 95814-2938, telephone (916) 445-7933 or Calnet 485-7933, FAX (916) 327-4417.

THE ROLE OF THE COMMISSION IN ACHIEVING EDUCATIONAL EQUITY: A Declaration of Policy (Revised)

Commission Report 94-11



ONE of a series of reports published by the California Postsecondary Education Commission as part of its planning and coordinating responsibilities. Single copies may be obtained without charge from the Commission at 1303 J Street, Suite 500, Sacramento, California 95814-2938. Recent reports include

- 93-22 *Creating a Campus for the Twenty-First Century • The California State University and Fort Ord* (October 1993)
- 93-23 *Restabilizing Higher Education: Moderating the Impact on California's College Students and the State's Future from Cutting State Support for Higher Education by \$1.4 Billion Over the Past Three Years: Report of the Executive Director of the California Postsecondary Education Commission, December 1993* (December 1993)
- 93-24 *The State of the State's Educational Enterprise: An Overview of California's Diverse Student Population* (December 1993)
- 94-1 *Legislative and State Budget Priorities of the Commission, 1994: A Report of the California Postsecondary Education Commission* (January 1994)
- 94-2 *Good Works: The Impact of the Human Corps on California's Public Universities: An Evaluation for the Legislature of the Effects of Assembly Bill 1820 (Chapter 1245, Statutes of 1987)* (April 1994)
- 94-3 *A Western Compact: A Report on California's Continued Membership in the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE)* (April 1994)
- 94-4 *Faculty Salaries in California's Public Universities, 1993-94: A Report to the Legislature and the Governor in Response to Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 51 (1965)* (April 1994)
- 94-5 *Progress on Regional Academic Planning: A Staff Report to the Commission in Response to the First in a Series of Joint Reports on Regional Academic Planning by California's Public Systems of Higher Education* (April 1994)
- 94-6 *Progress on College and University Assessments of Campus Climate: A Staff Report to the California Postsecondary Education Commission* (April 1994)
- 94-7 *Will the "Three Strikes" of (1) Escalating Prison Costs, (2) An Inflexible State Budget, and (3) Frozen State Revenues Strike Down Your Children's College Chances? A Message to Every Californian from Warren Halsey Fox, Executive Director, California Postsecondary Education Commission* (April 1994)
- 94-8 *Breaking Camp -- Building a Campus: The Commission's Analysis of the Proposal to Create California State University, Monterey Bay, at Fort Ord* (June 1994)
- 94-9 *Professional Degree Program Fees: A Report of the California Postsecondary Education Commission* (June 1994)
- 94-10 *California's Associate Degree Programs for Preparing Licensed Teacher Assistants: A Report to the Legislature in Response to Senate Bill 156 (Chapter 1345, Statutes of 1989)* (June 1994)
- 94-11 *The Role of the Commission in Achieving Educational Equity: A Declaration of Policy* [Original version published in December 1988 as Commission Report 88-42] (June 1994)